(b) Housing is a State subject and all housing schemes are implemented by the State Governments according to their priority and requirements. However the Central Government has, launched a new scheme for provision of shelter to the pavement dwellers, in the major metropolitan cities. Under this scheme, the Central Govt. gives grants-in-aid at the rate of Rs. 4000/- per household for identified pavement dwellers' for construction of individual dwelling units. The Scheme also provides for construction of night shelters and pay & use toilets. During the year 1988-89, grants-in-aid amounting to Rs. 2.99 crores have been released for the implementation of the scheme in the cities of Calcutta, Hyderabad and Madras. This will benefit 6410 pavement dwellers.

Establishment of Consumer Councils and Courts at the Centre and at District levels

518. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 envisages formation of Consumer Councils and Courts at the Centre and at the District level;

(b) what is the number of such Councils and Courts that have been established so far; and

(c) the reasons for delay in implementing the scheme?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 envisages formation of Consumer Protection Council at the Centre and the State Level and redressal machinery at national, State and district level. It does not envisage formation of Consumer Protection Council at District level.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has constituted the Central Consumer Protection Council and the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission which have started functioning. The State Government/UT Administrations are responsible for setting up of State level Consumer Protection Council, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (State Commission) and Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum (District Forum). As per information available, so far, 28 States/UTs have set up the State level Consumer Protection Council. Redressal machinery have started functioning in 7 States/UTs. 8 States/UTs. have notified the State Commission/District Forums. In addition, Central Government has conveyed its approval to 5 States to set up this machinery.

PDS facilities to residents of unauthorised colonies

519. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the basic purpose of introducing Public Distribution System is to provide certain essential commodities at subsidised rates to the public, particularly the poorest of the poor;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that the most vulnerable sections of society are not able to avail of this benefits as they are not entitled to get a 'ration card' in the absence of a regular residential address in an authorised colony, etc.;

(c) whether Government have considered the necessity of extending Public Distribution System facility to those poor people who are citizens of India but are not fortunate enough to live in any recognised colony and go under the definition of "pavement dwellers"; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) to (d) The purpose of the Public Distribution System is to provide essential commodities at reasonable prices to the public, including vulnerable sections of the society, as also to act as an anti-inflationary measure. The implementation of the PDS being the responsibility of the